



***United States Attorney
Southern District of New York***

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**BRONX MAN CONVICTED OF ARMED BANK ROBBERIES
IN BRONX, WESTCHESTER, AND DUTCHESS COUNTIES**

DAVID N. KELLEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that FRANK SMITH CASTILLO was convicted late Monday, in White Plains federal court, of the armed bank robbery of three separate banks located in the Bronx, Westchester, and Dutchess Counties, respectively. CASTILLO was also convicted of using and carrying a firearm, which was equipped with a silencer, in connection with each of those robberies, and with conspiring to rob the same banks, as well as several others. CASTILLO's conviction followed a jury trial that began on October 25, 2004, before United States District Judge CHARLES L. BRIEANT.

According to the Indictment and the evidence presented at trial, on March 19, 2003, CASTILLO and one of his accomplices entered the North Fork Bank located at 185 West 231st Street in the Bronx. While the accomplice jumped over the teller counter and gathered money in a bag, CASTILLO stood on the bank's floor

and held the customers and bank employees at bay with two guns, one of which was equipped with a silencer. The men then made off with approximately \$2,421. Using this same method of operation, the two men robbed the Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union, on Route 376 in Hopewell Junction, New York, on May 23, 2003, and the JP Morgan Chase Bank, at 17 Washington Avenue in Pleasantville, New York, on June 30, 2003. The men made off with \$9,401 and \$50,098, respectively, in those two robberies.

CASTILLO's accomplice, VICTOR MARRERO, previously pled guilty to participating in the above three bank robberies, as well as several others, and testified at CASTILLO's trial.

CASTILLO, 47, lived in the Bronx, New York, prior to his arrest in July 2003 on unrelated charges relating to his possession of a firearm and possession of explosive materials. CASTILLO was convicted last spring of those charges in federal court in Manhattan.

As a result of his convictions for possessing a silencer-equipped firearm in connection with three armed bank robberies, CASTILLO faces two mandatory life sentences and one mandatory sentence of thirty years' imprisonment. Separately, he faces a maximum sentence of twenty-five years' imprisonment for each of the three armed bank robbery convictions and a maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment for the conspiracy conviction.

Sentencing is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on February 10, 2005 in White Plains federal court.

CASTILLO was also charged in the Indictment with robbing four additional banks, and carrying firearms in connection with those robberies. The jury, however, was unable to reach a verdict as to those charges and Mr. KELLEY did not announce whether CASTILLO would be retried on those charges.

Mr. KELLEY praised the investigative efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the New York City Police Department, the New York State Police, the Westchester County Police Department and the police departments of Yonkers, New Rochelle, East Fishkill, Pleasantville, Briarcliff Manor, Bedford, and North Castle, New York, in connection with this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys JEFFREY A. UDELL and MARGERY FEINZIG are in charge of the prosecution.

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